

July 18 / Administration of George Bush, 1992

America is this: Don't quit. Don't walk away from the system. Don't believe that because there's no protest voice you have no vote at all.

Ross Perot's supporters believe in the same principles in which I believe about cutting the size of Government, about letting parents choose their kids' day care and high schools. And most of all, we agree about the need to break the deadlock in Washington, DC.

It is time to say "So long" to politics as usual. More than that, it's high time to shake up the system. If you'll excuse just one more political observation, you give me a Congress that shares my values and your values, and you'd see this system not just shaken but rattled and even rolled. And you will see real progress in our great country.

I know that Provo is one of America's youngest cities. For years, more babies were born at Utah Valley Hospital than any other hospital in America, more than most hospitals in the world. I heard from some not-so-reliable sources that lately some hospitals way up in northern Europe are surpassing your birth rates. But I guess that in Utah babies are born because of hope. Well, way up in northern Europe they are born because of hope and weather. [Laughter]

Now, as I look out on this audience today,

my guess is you're probably asking the question that every young generation asks: Will the future be bright? Will the dream stay alive? And despite all our challenges, I am betting on America. And I know you are, too. I still believe in America's capacity to confront any challenge and seize any opportunity. If we can topple the Berlin Wall and if we can reduce the threat of nuclear weapons and if we can do those things, we can build a strong economy. And if we can lift that Iron Curtain, we can bring the curtain down on immorality and indifference. And if we can help people walk free in Eastern Europe, we can take back the streets in the United States of America.

So this then is our mission, and this is our crusade. And together I am absolutely confident that we can get the job done for the United States of America.

God bless you. And may God bless our great country. Thank you very, very much.

*Note: The President spoke at 11:20 a.m. at the Marriott Center. In his remarks, he referred to Ron Hyde, advancement vice president, and Dee Andersen, administrative vice president, Brigham Young University; and the late David O. McKay, president of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints during the 1950's.*

## Remarks and a Question-and-Answer Session With the American Legion Boys Nation

July 20, 1992

*The President.* Thanks for the welcome. Hey, listen, I came out here to welcome you guys to the White House. Well, thank you very much. Please be seated, and let's get underway here. But I want to salute the national commander of the American Legion, who's done a great job, Dom DiFrancesco, and an old friend. I am a legionnaire and have been for a long, long time, lifetime member. And I have great respect for what Dom and Bob Turner, the past national commander who is with us today and also now the assistant director for activities for Boys Nation, do.

The Legion does a lot of good works, and I can't think of any of them that's better than what brings us here today. So let me first congratulate all 96 of the outstanding young leaders that are here today, representing 48 States. And I understand that some of you come from as far away as Anchorage up in Alaska and as near as Falls Church across the river. And Reagan DeMas, you absolutely have to tell me what life is like in a place called Boring, Oregon. [Laughter] Where is he? We'll talk about that.

But anyway, for two of you, the journey

has taken you even further, all the way from Communist Vietnam. What a moving story is Won Lee's, Nhon Trong Nguyen's. They have a great story to tell, leaving culture and country behind to start over, to start afresh here in the United States of America. Your presence here today reminds us all of America's meaning, of America's magic.

We all know that Boys Nation's alumni often go on to do remarkable things. It's no secret that two of America's great political leaders got their start in this organization. I'm talking about a former Governor, now our Secretary of Education, Lamar Alexander, and I'm talking about a former Congressman, now our very able Secretary of Defense, Dick Cheney.

I've held Boys Nation in high regard for many years. I remember, maybe Dom does, as Vice President about 10 years ago I had the honor of greeting some of your predecessors right here in Washington. Many of you were young then, 6 or 7 years old. But it's good to see that our younger generation continues to come forward with what the whole country sees as model citizens. You've reason to be proud of your accomplishments, and I hope that you're going to continue to achieve great things for our country.

Right now the country is focusing on some big questions: how America can compete and win in the global economy; how we'll educate our citizens and do it better, do it different, but educate our citizens for a new century; and how we'll open opportunity to all Americans and then preserve one Nation under God. Big issues, every one of them. We've got to realize that the solution for every one of these challenges literally starts close to home.

The question is this—and I've heard this from the mayors of urban America; I've heard it from everyone: Can we stop the assault on the American family? Can we strengthen the family, help parents pass on the moral code and character that goes with it and sustain us as a nation? So today, when you're focusing on college and career, let me share a little advice from someone whose next experience with the teens won't come until I actually hold in my arms my 13th grandchild.

What will matter years from now won't

be what you achieve or how much you earn or even what honors are showered on you along the way. What matters will be the kind of parent you've been, the kind of kids that you've raised. It all comes down to family. So today I want to salute the mothers and fathers who are here, every parent back home bursting with pride in you just because you're here, what you've achieved.

I also understand that while you're here in Washington you're going to be participating in your mock congress. I won't touch that one. [Laughter] But whether you end up in Congress or in front of the classroom or as leaders in business, your efforts and your skills will be absolutely vital to our country's continued success.

George Washington once challenged us to raise a standard to which the wise and honest can repair. And as a nation, our crusade is this: We must continue to defend our Nation's liberty and interest, and we must continually seek solutions to our country's ills, to refine this great democracy our forefathers created.

So let me urge you: Maintain your commitment to our country. Find ways to serve your neighbors and solve the problems of your communities. It cannot be done entirely from Washington, DC. Continue to spread the word about the benefits of our great system of democratic capitalism. And keep your eye on the greatest prize of all, ensuring that our country remains out there on the cutting edge, that America continues to be the example the whole world holds in awe. Believe me, the whole world still holds us in awe.

America is now and always will be the one nation that the entire world looks to for leadership. America is now and always will be a country whose purpose and values, whose global mission and economic success continues to be the success story of our time. And it's no secret why that's so. Throughout our history, individuals, achievers, people just like you have made it so.

America is now and always will be a rising nation. And we'll remain strong. We will succeed as long as young people like yourselves continue to support and advance

the values upon which our success is based and, really, upon which this wonderful program, Dom, is based.

So keep up the great work. Congratulations on what you have already achieved. But there's a great challenge lying out there ahead of each and every one of you. So good luck, and may God bless you all. And may God bless our wonderful country.

Now, what I thought we'd do is take a few questions and then go—how we're going to do this—I never saw so many hands up.

Shoot.

#### *Voter Registration Bill Veto*

Q. Mr. President, was the primary reason that you vetoed the motor voter bill the fact that it would increase the number of poor and young voters, groups in which you have little strength? If not, can we have a brief explanation?

*The President.* No, that had nothing to do with the veto of the bill. States have the right to set their own registration; everybody has a way to register. It has nothing to do with the poor and the young. Frankly, I think we're going to do very well with the young and, hopefully, with the poor. What it has to do, though, is with guarding against corruption of the voting process, and that's why I vetoed it.

#### *Urban Aid*

Q. Mr. President, my question to you is, throughout your term previous to the Rodney King verdict and the L.A. riots in particular, your support for Secretary Jack Kemp's programs in the areas of housing and urban development appeared to come very reluctantly. Yet you approved generous emergency expenditures to help provide relief for the desperate situation at hand. If elected to a second term, do you plan to increase Government funding for the HUD programs?

*The President.* The answer is no, but the answer is I've been diligently for the program. The program is mine. I'm the President; I set the program. Kemp has been a superb advocate for homeownership, for enterprise zones, for the things that we believe really would have helped avoid some of the crisis in the cities. So I have been

advocating it and supporting it and introducing it in the Congress all along.

Even after the riots we had the Mayor of Los Angeles here, Tom Bradley; the Governor of the State; Peter Ueberroth, who is trying to bring jobs into the center city. They all supported strongly the enterprise zones. And it took weeks to get that passed even in the face of the riots.

So now, in terms of will I increase spending, I can't pledge that. I don't want to be in any false colors. I want these programs there to bring jobs in the private sectors into the city. I want our "Weed and Seed" program, which is weeding out the criminal elements and then seeding the areas with hope and opportunity, to pass. But there's another big problem facing this country, and it is the deficit. I know that this is the year when everybody promises, I'm going to do this for that, each little interest group, each big interest group being pledged and promised to, but I can't do that because I am determined to fight to get this deficit down.

So we've got good programs, and I think they'd make an enormous difference in the cities, and I hope you all can support them.

#### *Economic Plan*

Q. The economic plan that Bill Clinton unveiled at the Democratic National Convention last week is rapidly gaining support. What flaws do you see in his plan as you compare it to your own?

*The President.* Well, I don't think it's rapidly gaining too much support. What I see is a program that does not address itself to the deficit, and I'll have a lot more to say about that later on. I think we've got to get the deficit down. I don't think you need to go raise taxes on people right now. I think that's a big mistake. I think it's counterproductive. When you analyze the program, they have this expression around here, smoke and mirrors. You're going to save it all by eliminating overhead, eliminating waste, and there's billions of dollars that is earmarked to do that. And I just don't think that's practical.

So when the campaign comes on, there's going to be a very serious comparative analysis on our part. I don't think the program

is gaining strength. He had one that was quite different a few months ago, and now, just in time for the convention, out comes another one. But both of them result in taxing.

You see, I think the Government is spending too much, and that's why I had to answer this question here like that. I don't think people are taxed too little. I don't think that's the problem. So we're going to have a big difference on the economic approach. Our economic incentives are out there. They're strong, and they're good.

#### *North American Free Trade Agreement*

Q. Regarding the United States and Mexico free trade agreement, don't you think that if it was passed that the standard of living in the Southwest United States will drop and it would also result in more unemployment? Also, what are the short- and long-term goals you hope to achieve by having this free trade agreement?

*The President.* I'm convinced that NAFTA, the North American free trade agreement, will increase the standard of living on both sides of the border. I am absolutely convinced that it will increase jobs for Americans. Look at what happened when we entered into the deal with Canada. Business is way up in both ways, trade going both ways. The same thing will happen in Mexico. And I am afraid that in the Mexican case in some of the opposition there is some discrimination against our southern neighbor.

I don't care whether it's good politics or bad politics, I'm going to work for free trade. I want to see the NAFTA agreement passed. And I am absolutely convinced that it will mean more jobs for Americans and good jobs. The argument is, well, all the companies will flee to Mexico. That's not true; they could do that now. There are many reasons that companies place investment where they do.

NAFTA is only going to increase Mexico's ability to import goods. It's going to increase their standard of living, which will bring relief to our borders out near San Diego where you have immigration going across the way. It will give them the wherewithal to have better environmental standards, and

it will give more jobs to the United States because our exports, which have already gone up substantially, will go up more.

So I'm for free trade. I'm not for protection. I'm not for promising one thing out in Detroit and then trying to deny that it was said some other part of the country.

#### *Education*

Q. Mr. President, I would like to ask you with regard to education, do you think that a national standard achievement test at the lower grade levels would be a good way to gauge how well our education system is doing?

*The President.* Yes, and part of our program feels that a national system of volunteer testing would be good. That's part of our proposal. I emphasize the word "volunteer" because I still believe that your community should really control the curriculum and the hours and the teacher's pay and whatever it is. Most people forget that about 6 percent, I believe it is, of funding on education is at the Federal level, our level, and 90-some percent is where it belongs at the local and State level.

But this concept of testing is a good one. I think kids need to know where they stand with others across the country; parents have the right to have that information. But I emphasize it should be on a voluntary basis.

Let's get in the back rows, back here.

Oh, the man's bringing gifts. Come right up.

Q. I'd like to present this to you on behalf of Boys Nation.

*The President.* Thanks a lot. Now we're talking. This is great. Thank you very much, Steve.

Q. Mr. President, I'm a student of the middle class, and there's an ever-increasing problem with the students that I represent that we simply do not have the funds to attend the colleges of our choices to take the leadership roles in Government. What can you tell the students of the middle class to affirm the fact that the buck does stop here and you're taking a leadership position in our plight to have affordable college education?

*The President.* I can tell them that the best thing that we can do there is to get the

whole economic system moving. I can tell them that we've increased funding for that kind of student loan program, and we've just got to keep doing it to support those that need scholarships. A big problem is when you're operating at these enormous deficits, you can't go out and promise to increase spending beyond which we've already increased it. I'm the guy that has the plan. The buck does stop here. We have increased programs for the funding for student loans, contrary to some of the political—I can't wait for this campaign to start to go after some of the things I'm hearing out there. But we've just got to keep going on it, and we will do our very best.

Way in back here. Yes.

#### *Foreign Aid*

Q. Mr. President, I'd just like to commend you on your fine foreign policy. But the question I pose to you is this: Do you feel the only way we can have a strong foreign policy is pumping the billions of dollars that we do into other countries' economy? Being a visitor to Washington, DC, we took a bus ride, and we drove through the Capital City, and I saw some of the most depressed and poverty-stricken areas I've ever seen. Why can't we bring some of that foreign policy money home to where it belongs in our Nation?

*The President.* Well, I'll tell you, maybe you've missed the fact that we've cut the defense budget substantially. We can't cut the muscle of defense. We're not going to do that. I stood here with Boris Yeltsin and did something that affected the lives of everybody here, everybody here. We worked out the most historic nuclear arms reduction package that's ever happened, thus reducing the fear of nuclear war that some of you guys may have grown up with when you were younger. The pressure has been bled off. We have to keep a strong defense. We have cut the defense budget by billions of dollars, and we'll continue to look at it as the world changes. But we can't cut into the muscle of it.

Secondly, in terms of foreign aid, it's always been unpopular. There's always a guy that says, "Don't do that abroad. Do it all at home." And that's a mood out there in this country. But it is in our interests, hu-

manitarian interest, to help people abroad. It's the United States that always has taken the lead. As long as I'm President, we'll continue to take the lead. But we are going to have to try to do these things that will forestall our need to use military action.

That's the reason, rationale for it. But listen, I understand the desire to have more at home, and yet, again, I'm not going to please everybody by saying we're going to increase spending on one program or another. We've got a good budget. Spending has gone dramatically up. But we've got to hold the line on it now. We've got to get the deficit down.

#### *Presidential Campaign*

Q. Mr. President, I was wondering, isn't it disheartening that all of your actions are either maligned, belittled, or ignored by the national media?

*The President.* Now we're talking here. Those back here are not smiling, those beyond those with the red and white shirts. Look, you've got to take it in life. Nobody ever said it would be a bed of roses. I found that over the years in politics or in business or whatever it is.

I have a very quiet confidence when I take my case to the American people that things will work out. But to be very honest, it's not pleasant. It's not pleasant. The one I don't like the most is when they go after your family, try to make corruption out of a family that's been honorable and decent. I don't like it when they do that kind of thing.

But they've got their job to do; I've got mine to do. I'm not going to be stampeded into anything by a lot of that kind of press. When we get into the campaign, I will try to draw the distinctions between myself and the opponents. I'll try to put out the positive aspects of our record: the war on crime; the fact that we've got a sound, revolutionary education program; what we're trying to do, in answer to your question, about bringing homeownership and hope into the cities; the fact that we've got the best health care reform of anybody up there, sitting right there, languishing, and the fact that we've got a program that if we could only get this Congress to work on it

would do something for health care.

So we've got the programs. Now, the fact that that's not resonating and the press seems to be critical, that changes. I go back to '88, and I remember a great reporter for the New York Times—I don't know what he's doing now, but I think he's gone onto greater things—saying, “dogged by Iran-Contra, the President landed in Iowa today.” They've always got some kind of sensationalist thing.

But the facts are the programs are sound. I hope that I will pass the test of commitment to country. I am proud, as I told Dom earlier, of having served my country. I believe that what we've accomplished around the world is substantial, major, the ending of the cold war. I think what we did with Yeltsin, getting rid of these ICBM's, I happen to think it's big, and you don't read a darn thing about it in the press.

I didn't listen, I've got to confess to you guys I did not listen to the Democratic National Convention. I was fishing. I suppose I could have turned on a radio, but I just didn't feel inclined to do it. But there was no mention, I am told retrospectively, of the major accomplishments that the American people and this administration has made in bringing peace to the world and standing up against aggression in the process, setting an example. So when I said in my remarks people look to the United States for leadership, they do, but that has no resonance. I think it will. I think every family in America in their hearts know that we are in a less-threatened position.

I loved it when I'm told that my opponent, one of them I guess, at the convention said, “Well we've changed the world. Now let's change America.” Hey, a Democratic candidate dropped out of the race for plagiarism last year. This is a comment that I've been saying, and now we're trying to get it done. We have changed the world. Now let's change America. Use that same leadership.

And parenthetically, if you want to know what I think really needs to be changed, it is the control of the House of Representatives. We have had the same control of Congress, same control in the House since 1956, maybe earlier. They talk about institutions changing; Presidents have changed, dif-

ferent parties; the Senate has changed. The one institution—those who know how to run the bank and the post office up there haven't changed for 36 years. We are going to take that case to the American people.

### *The Economy*

*Q.* My question to you concerns us as young Americans. When we get out of college and university, how are we going to be assured as qualified Americans that there will be jobs for us to pursue our careers as citizens?

*The President.* One, the economy is improving. Not near enough. It is growing. You wouldn't hear that—I keep citing a statistic that 92 percent of the economic news has been negative as you analyze it. They've got this group that analyzes the news coverage. A tremendous percentage, 60 percent, think the economy's getting worse. A lot of people are hurting, but the overall national economy is growing, not near enough.

What I want to do is stimulate it to grow more. That was what was behind and still remains behind an incentive program that encourages buying homes; that encourages getting the deficit down; that encourages changing the—this is technical—but the IRA rules; that encourages an investment tax allowance to stimulate the investment in equipment that actually brings jobs. So jobs are being created, not fast enough.

If I can get the American people to give the strong support in Congress for the economic program, I believe that's the best guarantee of jobs for people. It is not going to be Government-created jobs, by the Government getting into the private sector. I oppose that. This idea of an industrial policy where the Government should pick the winners and losers is wrong. What we ought to do is increase the R&D credits so you stimulate the research that has made this country a job-creating country.

So that's the program that I'll be taking to the American people.

### *AIDS*

*Q.* AIDS cases being so epidemic, do you have any national plans to inform the public and get the AIDS cases down so it

doesn't keep rising?

*The President.* The question is on AIDS cases being so epidemic. Absolutely. We asked for \$4.9 billion. We've been spending at the rate of about \$4.3 billion on AIDS. That's about 10 times as much as on, say, cancer, per case. We have got to educate the American people, and I'm trying to do that. We've got to demonstrate compassion. We have got to go against behavior that causes AIDS. Education: AIDS is one disease that can't be totally controlled by behavior but some of it can, dirty needles, for example. So we've got to win that drug fight. We have got the biggest and best research, by far, program of any country in the world.

I had a couple of the top specialists in here the other day, Dr. Fauci at NIH. They are encouraged in what that research will bring. Some of you are—well, none of you were alive when they discovered the Salk vaccine for polio, but that's the line they're approaching it, our great research labs. I am somewhat optimistic about achieving a major breakthrough in that.

But in the meantime, we've got to speak

with compassion. We've got to demonstrate the concern that we all feel in our hearts about this. We've got to be sure that we do the utmost we can in research. And then we've got to all speak out in terms of the behaviors that cause AIDS in some cases, not all, but in some cases. I plan to continue to do that.

But it's a national problem. It's one where we really—it's heartbreak hill. It's just everybody in one way or another has a friend that's touched with this. We just simply have to win this fight, and I'm optimistic we will.

Listen, I gather they're telling me we're out of here. But we only got about 4 percent of the questions, I think. But thank you very, very much. And I wish we didn't have to go. Thank you all. And good luck to all of you. We're very, very proud of you.

*Note: The President spoke at 9:32 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. During the question-and-answer session, Steve Kennedy, Mississippi representative and secretary of the senate for Boys Nation, presented a polo shirt to the President.*

## Statement on the Resignation of Václav Havel as President of Czechoslovakia

July 20, 1992

Today President Václav Havel resigned from his post as the President of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic. President Havel is one of the outstanding statesmen of our time, and we regret his departure. President Havel's courage has come to symbolize the determination of all the peoples of Eastern Europe to reject communism and to accept the challenges of the transition to democracy and a free market economy. He energized, as he once wrote, "the power of the powerless." President Havel

has made a historic and heroic contribution to the cause of freedom. We are confident he will continue to do so whatever the future may bring.

The future of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic is up to its people. We will respect their decision and are confident it will be peaceful, cooperative, and democratic. We look forward to sustaining our traditionally close relations with its people.